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Office of Administration

OA Commissions -

Governor's Council on Disability

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2004 Annual Report

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History

Governor's Council on Disability traces its roots to the World War II era. In 1947 President Harry S Truman issued an Executive Order establishing the President's Committee on Employment of the Handicapped. This Committee was created to assist disabled WWII veterans with re-entry into the civilian workforce. In 1949 Missouri established the state Governor's Committee to share information about work-related problems facing people with disabilities. In 1994 our statute was updated to broaden our mission beyond employment, enabling the Governor's Council on Disability to become a voice for the more than 900,000 Missourians with disabilities in all facets of life, including state government.

Mission - Vision

Mission

To provide leadership and support so people with disabilities achieve inclusion and independence.

Vision

A state where people with disabilities fully participate in all aspects of community life.

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Council Membership

- 20 members and a chairperson comprise the Council.
- The Governor appoints members.
- The appointment of the chairperson requires the advice and consent of the Missouri Senate.
- Members represent each of the nine U.S Congressional Districts.
- The majority of members are people with disabilities.

Mr. James Tuscher, Chair
3rd Congressional District
St. Louis
First Appointed: 3/11/93

Ms. Karen Benson
7th Congressional District
Mount Vernon
First Appointed: 10/9/01

Mr. Stanley Brown
Member 11
St. Louis
First Appointed: 10/18/02

Mr. Mikael Fredholm
4th Congressional District
Camdenton
First Appointed: 7/6/99

Ms. Patricia Gallagher
Member 9
Kansas City
First Appointed: 8/20/03

Mr. Charles Graham
9th Congressional District
Columbia
First Appointed: 4/20/01

Ms. Deanna Harper
Member 7
Columbia
First Appointed: 6/11/01

Ms. Mary Ellen Jenison

Ms. Michele Ohmes
Member 10
Kansas City
First Appointed: 7/6/99

Ms. Renee Dawn Powell
5th Congressional District
Columbia
First Appointed: 10/16/03

Ms. Susan Remelius
Member 4
Columbia
First Appointed: 6/22/01

Dr. C. David Roberts
Member 6
Columbia
First Appointed: 9/1/96

Dr. Joseph Sartorius
Member 2
St. Louis
First Appointed: 11/8/02

Ms. Naomi Soule
Member 5
St. Louis
First Appointed: 9/2/99

Mr. David Terrell
8th Congressional District
Sikeston
First Appointed: 10/14/99

Ms. Lori Winter
Member 3

Member 8
Lee's Summit
First Appointed: 8/9/96

Ms. Donna Lange
1st Congressional District
Sedalia
First Appointed: 6/5/03

Ms. Stephanie Logan
6th Congressional District
Columbia
First Appointed: 10/14/99

Mr. Todd Mayfield
Member1
Jefferson City
First Appointed: 10/9/01

St. Louis
First Appointed: 1/13/00

Vacant
2nd Congressional District

Vacant
Member 12

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Organizational Structure

People of Missouri

Governor Bob Holden

Governor's Council on Disability - Robert Honan, Executive Director

Linda Baker Oberst, Disability Program Specialist

Donna Borgmeyer and Elizabeth Reinert, Disability Program Representatives

Elizabeth Whaley, Executive Assistant

The Governor's Council on Disability and Missouri Assistive Technology were transferred, by Executive Order, from the Department of Labor and Industrial Relations to the Office of Administration. Upon our transfer the two agencies also split into two separate entities within state government.

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Accomplishments 2004

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Technical Assistance Calls

The Governor's Council on Disability provides disability-related technical assistance to any Missourian. In calendar year 2004, Council staff assisted 634 citizens, businesses, organizations, state departments and legislators from around the state.

There were a variety of requests from callers last year. The calls were so diverse that no one day seemed to duplicate itself. The following paragraph provides a glimpse into the nature of our technical assistance inquiries.

One of the more common calls was from individuals requesting information on short-term disability for pregnancy. Another popular request was locating funding for home modifications, for retrofitting vehicles for physical accessibility, and for everyday support (many callers were waiting on their Social Security Disability Insurance or Supplemental Security Income to be approved). Inquiries relating to the federal Family Medical Leave Act were also a high priority for callers. Each year calls relating to this topic have increased because more and more employers and employees are becoming aware of this law. Other common employment-related issues included such as questions as, "where can I find a job" or "I think I might have been discriminated against by my employer- what do I do?" We also fielded questions about minimum technical specifications on such things as the width of a doorway or the height of a toilet or the whether or not a building needs an elevator.

We provided the necessary requested information to callers, but we sometimes directed callers to resources that could better assist them. These resources ranged from their local center for independent living to local, county, state and federal government agencies. Other referral sources included non-profits such as Community Action Agencies and religious organizations. State legislators also proved themselves to be a very good resource in "getting things done."

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Presentations

The Governor's Council on Disability provides educational programs on disability rights and disability awareness to any group or organization wanting such information. We work with the requesting individual or group to learn what their needs are and tailor our educational programming to fit those needs. During calendar year 2004 Council staff presented 48 custom presentations to over 4,000 interested individuals around the state.

A large number of individuals attended a three-day training, known as the Legislative Education Project or LEP, at the state capitol during the 2004 legislative session. Participants came in on Tuesday morning and were given an overview of the legislative process and a list of bills that have an impact on individuals with disabilities. Participants were then encouraged to visit with senators and representatives and their staffs to discuss their concerns and voice their opinions. Attendees were also strongly encouraged to attend any hearings that took place while they were in Jefferson City. Individuals left Jefferson City on Thursday of the week with a new confidence in getting their voice heard both in Jefferson City and back in their home districts.

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Awards

The Governor's Council on Disability sponsors the Annual Inclusion Awards and Poster and Journalism Contests.

Annual Inclusion Awards

The Annual Inclusion Awards are awarded to recognize and honor individuals, groups,

organizations and businesses for their successful inclusion of people with disabilities in the areas of employment, education, parenting and community

The 2004 awards were presented to the individual/group in their own community so that the local community could participate in this exciting event.

The 2003 Inclusion Awards winners were:

Bob Aldridge Advocate of the Year - Ms. Diane Mack, Blue Springs, Missouri - Ms. Mack lives and breathes inclusion, whether she is educating students, community members, legislators or any other member of the public. She has devoted numerous articles in her newspaper column at the *Blue Springs Examiner* on the subject of inclusion. She is passionate that all families should have the right to care for their children in a loving home at any age necessary. Due in part to her efforts, paid family caregivers are now a reality for many Missouri families. Ms. Mack's passion for inclusion in all aspects of community life is truly inspiring.

Educator of the Year - Chris Neff, Carl Junction High School - Due to the efforts of Ms. Neff, Carl Junction High School is one of only seven school districts in the state of Missouri that made "Adequate Yearly Progress" for students with disabilities. Ms. Neff has also increased special education students' involvement in extracurricular activities. They even operate their own school store on the high school campus. Carl Junction Special Education students are fully integrated into the regular high school's social and academic atmosphere and truly accepted for whom they are and that they contribute to the school environment.

Employer of the Year - Friendship Village of South County, St. Louis, Missouri- Friendship Village has included individuals with disabilities for over twenty years. They offer more than just a "job" for their employees. Not only does the staff at Friendship Village act as natural mentors and develop friendships with the students, but the residents do as well. Friendship Village opens their doors to the staff of the Special School District. Staff of Friendship Village has requested in-services to provide a more cohesive environment between all individuals. Friendship Village has truly created an immersed society for all people.

The Excellence in Universal Design and Technology Award - Sara Clark, Web Coordinator, SMSU, Springfield, Missouri - Ms. Clark has sparked a desire for excellence and is working hard to bring SMSU into compliance and become a leader in the state. She has created the most comprehensive model for ensuring web accessibility at the postsecondary level of any university in the state and perhaps the nation. Ms. Clark clearly and effectively communicated to the campus community the web accessibility standards and how good web design/web accessibility would benefit all users. She truly understands how to make technology work for all people rather than against some.

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Poster and Journalism Contests

The Poster and Journalism Contests reward excellence in art and journalism while increasing disability awareness among Missouri's youth. Both contests are open to middle and high school students grades 7 through 12. Information about the contests is distributed statewide to schools and local organizations. More than 300 essays and posters were submitted in the contests in 2004. The first, second, and third place posters were displayed at the luncheon. The winners received a cash prize of \$100, \$250, \$500 respectively. The prize money was donated by independent living centers from around the state. Other businesses donated items that were used as "door" prizes for the non-winning entrants. The winners for the 2003-2004 Poster and Journalism Contests were:

Missouri Poster Contest

1st Place - Whitney Kertz, 10th Grade, Westran R-I High School, Huntsville MO

2nd Place - Bev Taylor, 12th Grade, Dixon High School, Dixon MO

3rd Place - Stephanie Rios, 12th Grade, Blue Springs High School, Blue Springs MO

Missouri Journalism Contest

1st Place - Logan M. Skelley, 10th Grade, Joplin High School, Joplin MO

2nd Place - Lindsey Pearson, 7th Grade, Bode Middle School, St. Joseph MO

3rd Place - Katie Meyer, 9th Grade, Grace'n' Glory Christian Academy, New Franklin MO

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Publications

The Governor's Council on Disability publishes a variety of information, including the *Directory of Resources for Missourians with Disabilities*, which is being reprinted. In 2004, over 700 print copies were requested with hundreds more being directed to our website for the on-line version. Having interested parties access the Directory via our homepage saved our office thousands of dollars in printing and shipping costs, plus it is more user friendly since it is completely searchable via several different categories.

In addition, during the legislative session a weekly update, *Legislative Update*, was distributed to keep concerned individuals up-to-date on legislation that potentially impacts individuals with disabilities. Over 350 individuals received the publication via email and the regular mail system.

The Governor's Council on Disability also provided a variety of other publications, including the *Americans with Disabilities Act Accessibility Guidelines*, the *Equal Employment Opportunity Commission Questions and Answer* booklets, *Disaster Preparedness for Persons with Disabilities*, and *Missouri State Capitol Access Guide*.

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Missouri Business Leadership Network

The Business Leadership Network (BLN) sponsored two major events last year. The first was Employer's Recognition Program - "How People with Disabilities Can Benefit Business" presented by David Little. Hosted by Ameren, this event took place in the fall of 2004. St. Luke's Hospital hosted the spring (2004) event, a panel discussion focusing on "Accommodations for Psychiatric Disabilities: from the Employer and Legal Perspectives." The panel consisted of Sheryl Rose, Missouri Commission on Human Rights, Ms. Karen Gotsch, Human Relations Manager at HealthLink, and Attorney Joan Cohen.

The St. Louis branch of the Missouri Business Leadership Network (BLN) has a new lead employer, Ameren. They adopted by-laws and is in the process of updating their website (www.mobln.org). Savvis Center and Boeing also hosted a mentoring day activity for St. Louis Special School District students.

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Disability Mentoring Activities

The Governor's Council on Disability, General Motors, Sprint and Assurant Employees Benefit Insurance organized and hosted the third annual Disability Mentoring Day luncheon on October 18, 2004 at the University of Missouri-Kansas City (UMKC). The event attracted representatives from 75 area companies who are involved in or are beginning to investigate disability-related mentoring, job shadowing, or career exploration. One highlight of the luncheon's program was a presentation made by two high school student mentees from the UMKC Summer Transportation Institute. Businesses attending the Mentoring Day luncheon are encouraged to participate in the yearlong mentoring program sponsored by the Business Partnership Initiative (BPI) of Kansas City, a network of employers that shares resources and education about hiring persons with disabilities.

To improve awareness that the unemployment rate of persons with disabilities is still far too high and to promote the vast resources that disabled citizens bring to the workforce, the Division of Vocational Rehabilitation along with our Kansas City office coordinated a Disability ResourceExpo in the Kansas City area. The event, which has been held twice and is expected to become an annual event, brought rehabilitation agencies, schools, providers of medical equipment and technology that assists person with disabilities, health organizations, state disability offices and employers under one roof so that future employees and employers could share information and make an employment match.

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Missouri Youth Leadership Forum

The 2004 Youth Leadership Forum (YLF) was held in Columbia, Missouri. Ten student delegates took part in the four-day event, which is a unique career leadership-training program for high school juniors and seniors with disabilities. By serving as delegates from their communities at the four-day event, young people with disabilities cultivated leadership, citizenship, and social skills. There were many activities that allowed the delegates to cultivate these skills, including speakers, small group discussions, assistive technology demonstrations, career exploration, mentoring luncheon, and a day in Jefferson City to meet with legislators. The 2005 YLF will be held in Columbia from July 24-28, 2005. Besides the Governor's Council on Disability, the Missouri Planning Council for Developmental Disabilities and the Independent Living Resource Center, Inc. are organizing the 2005 event.

Boards and Commissions

As part of the advisory capacity of Governor's Council on Disability's function, staff and council members serve on a variety of boards and commissions to promote opportunities in all aspects of life, including employment, transportation, recreation and housing. The following is a list of those boards and committees in which staff and council members served in calendar year 2004.

- Accessible Housing Consortium, St. Louis
- American Association of People with Disabilities, Kansas City
- American Council of the Blind, St. Louis
- Blind Literacy Task Force, Jefferson City
- Brain Injury Association of Missouri, St. Louis
- Cardinals Access Committee, St. Louis
- Central Missouri United Way, Jefferson City
- Children's Learning Center, Osage Beach
- Clay and Platte County Parks, Trails and Greenways Board of Directors, Kansas City
- Coalition for Independence, Kansas City
- Community Rehabilitation Programs in Iowa, Kansas, Missouri and Nebraska, Columbia
- Concrete Change-Accessible Housing, Osage Beach
- Council of State Directors of Vocational Rehabilitation, Columbia
- Disability Policy Congress, Jefferson City

- Disabled Task Force, Columbia
- Down Syndrome Association of Mid-Missouri, Columbia
- Early Childhood Comprehensive System Grant Planning Committee
- Epilepsy Support Group, Columbia
- Gateway Chapter, Paralyzed Veterans Association, St. Louis
- Governor's Council on AIDS, Jefferson City
- Heartland Productive Coalition, Kansas City
- Heritage Trail and River Walk, Kansas City
- Independent Living Resource Center, Jefferson City
- Informed Choice Training Workgroup, Jefferson City
- Kansas City Coalition Emergency and Disaster Response Board of Directors, Kansas City
- Kansas City Transportation Authority, Kansas City
- LEAP Project, St. Louis
- Learning Disabilities Association of America, Kansas City
- Learning Disabilities Association of Missouri, Kansas City
- Lincoln University 504/ADA Committee, Jefferson City
- Maryville University - Rehabilitation Counseling Program Advisory Committee, St. Louis
- Mayor's Committee on Disability, Kansas City
- MDA Awareness Task Force, Kansas City
- METRO Advisory Committee, St. Louis
- Metro Bi State Advisory Committee, St. Louis
- Minds Eye Information Services, St. Louis
- Missouri Council of the Blind, St. Louis
- Missouri Department of Elementary and Secondary Education Blind Task Force, St. Louis
- Missouri Department of Elementary and Secondary Education Special Education Advisory Panel, St. Louis
- Missouri Parent's Act, Jefferson City
- Missouri Ticket to Work Coalition, Jefferson City
- Missouri Training and Employment Council, Jefferson City Governor's appointee
- Missouri-Kansas Council for Learning Disabilities, Kansas City
- MOTASH, St. Louis
- MS Institute, Columbia
- MS Society, St. Louis
- National Council on Independent Living, Mt. Vernon
- National Council on Rehabilitation Education, Columbia
- National Disability Mentoring Day Local Committee, Kansas City
- National Institute on Disability and Rehabilitation Research, Columbia
- National Summer Institute, Kansas City
- Nelson Atkins Museum of Art, Kansas City
- North Kansas City School District Vocational Carpentry Advisory Board, Kansas City
- Olmstead Stakeholders Group, Jefferson City, St. Louis
- Personal Independence Commission Community Education Workgroup, Jefferson City
- Rehabilitation Services Administration, Columbia
- Share-A-Fare (Paratransit), Kansas City
- Special Needs Population Task Force, Mt. Vernon
- St. Louis County Commission on Disabilities, St. Louis
- St. Louis Transitional Council, St. Louis
- Starkloff Leadership Forum, St. Louis
- State Vocational Rehabilitation Agencies, Columbia
- Statewide Emergency Management Planning Teams, Statewide
- Statewide Independent Living Council, Jefferson City, Governor's appointee
- Taskforce on Fair Transportation, St. Louis
- Universal Design Housing Network, Kansas City
- University of Missouri Extension Council, Osage Beach
- University of Missouri-Kansas City Advisory Committee, Kansas City
- VSA, St. Louis
- West-Central Independent Living Center, Warrensburg

Legislation

Legislative Priorities 2005

Each year the Governor's Council on Disability discusses and votes on legislative priorities for the forthcoming legislative session. The 2005 Governor's Council on Disability legislative priorities are:

- Work to preserve Medicaid programs, services and funding
- Work to preserve Medicaid dental and optical services
- Address statewide need for accessible transportation
- Address statewide need for accessible, affordable housing
- Additional increase in funding for all direct care workers in home and community based settings in keeping with original Olmstead Commission recommendations

The Governor's Council on Disability tracks legislation impacting persons with disabilities each year, following are the pieces of legislation that passed and Governor Holden signed into law in 2004. The bill number, sponsor and brief description of substance of bill are provided.

- HB 0855 - Holand Requires parity between insurance coverage of mental health services and other health services
- HB 0923 - Holand Amends requirements of Missouri Family Trust
- HB 1195 - Behmen Expands professional licensing sections including language dealing with interpreters
- SB 0730 - Gross Creates the Missouri Homestead Preservation Act
- SB 1003 - Gibbons Creates a comprehensive children's mental health system
- SB 1080 - Nodler Relating to Requirements for MAP testing
- SB 1083 Modifies age limitations for testing of lead poisoning in children
- SB 1123 - Gibbons Requires Div of Medical Services to annually recalculate the Medicaid nursing home reimbursement amount
- SB 1160 - Shields Establishes the Prescription Drug Repository Program

Personal Independence Commission

The Personal Independence Commission (PIC) completed its third year of work. As established in Executive Order 01-08 signed by Governor Bob Holden on April 10, 2001, the PIC is charged with advising the Governor on necessary policy and program changes to assure that Missourians of all ages and disabilities have access to a range of community support services. The PIC includes individuals with disabilities, family members of people with disabilities, senior citizens, advocacy groups, the lieutenant governor, four members of the general assembly and representatives from the Departments of Social Services, Mental Health, Health and Senior Services and Elementary and Secondary Education.

Our tasks this year focused on implementing the Special Projects Team Action Plan in the areas of common application/assessment information, transition from institutions, assuring community options, and the Real Choice Systems Change grant.

For more information, visit the Personal Independence Commission website at <http://www.gcd.ia.mo.gov/PIC/pic.shtml>.

April 11, 2005
June 13, 2005
August 8, 2005
October 17, 2005

Governor's Council on Disability
2005 Council Meeting Dates

March 4, 2005
June 3, 2005
September 9, 2005
December 2, 2005

2005 Missouri Youth Leadership Forum
University of Missouri-Columbia
July 24-28, 2005

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